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# *Food and Home Notes*

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## ON CONVENIENCE FOODS

In 1974, Americans spent over \$147 billion for food -- a third of this amount was spent for food eaten away from home which means nearly one out of three meals.

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The use of convenience foods, both for home use, and in restaurant facilities (fast food outlets as well as other food services) is expected to continue to increase according to a report by the Economic Research Service/U.S. Department of Agriculture. This appears to be a result of a new technology...disposable packaging, new package coatings and film, and the concept of portion control.

Convenience foods is "food that is fully or partially prepared; food in which significant amounts of preparation time, culinary skills, and energy inputs have been transferred from the kitchen of the food service outlet to the food processor and distributor."

Some of the significant changes may be attributed to the packaging industry. We now have foil cans, two-piece cans, pop-tops, portion-control trays, and individual serving packs. There are many improved methods for storage, processing, and distribution systems.

Nearly 2/5th of all convenience foods introduced during 1968-73 were entrees-- mostly frozen. Cakes and pastries were second, and half of those were thaw and serve. Actually a full sixty percent of the total items were frozen...and 24 percent were fresh.





Albany County

WYOMING

(August 1933)

...Farm woman making soap.



Haskell County, Texas...Storing canned fruits in cellar...September 1931  
BICENTENNIAL PHOTOS•FOOD AND HOME NOTES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



## ALMOST ALL ABOUT...BROILER - FRYERS

Broiler-fryer chickens -- these young chickens about eight weeks old -- are making records in the market place. Record marketings will be about 11 percent more than September 1975 and 19 percent above the September 1973-75 average of 638 million pounds ready-to-cook broiler-fryers.



What are the characteristics of a broiler-fryer? The meat is tender and mild flavored. The skin is soft, pliable, smooth-textured and the breastbone cartilage is flexible.

What should a shopper look for when buying a broiler-fryer? Look for the USDA Grade A shield on the package wrapper or tag. It indicates that the bird is meaty and free from pinfeathers, broken bones, bruises, cuts, and tears.

What choice does the shopper have when buying broiler-fryers? There are whole and cut-up birds and birds cut into halves and quarters. There are packages of just wings, or drumsticks, or breasts or thighs or necks and backs. There are special combination packs of selected parts.

What is the best way to cook broiler-fryers? These tender young chickens are excellent for frying, roasting, barbecuing, and broiling. They may also be stewed and the meat cut from the bone may be used in salads, casseroles, and sandwiches.

Are broiler-fryers usually sold fresh or frozen? Over 90 percent of the broiler-fryers sold are fresh; the rest are frozen. The fresh birds reach the foodstores as ice-packed or chill-packed.

## ALMOST ALL ABOUT...BROILER - FRYERS (CON'T)

Processors ship ice-packed chickens in containers with ice, and they are packaged at the store. Chill-packed chickens are first chilled to 28°F. by the processor, and are packaged and sent to the store at that temperature. The surface will feel crusty but the meat is not frozen.

What is the proper way to handle broiler-fryers at home? Broiler-fryer chicken is perishable. Take home as quickly as possible and put in the refrigerator or freezer immediately. Fresh, chilled chicken should be used within 1 to 2 days. Frozen chicken will maintain quality at 0°F. for up to 1 year (if whole) and 9 months (if cut up). Chicken should always be cooked promptly after thawing.

\* \* \* \* \*



How should leftover egg yolks be stored and how soon should they be used?

Cover leftover egg yolks with cold water and store in the refrigerator in a covered container. Extra egg whites should also be refrigerated in this way. Use leftover yolks and whites within 2 to 4 days.

Can cracked eggs be used safely in home prepared foods?

U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists say if eggs are cracked, use them only in foods that will be thoroughly cooked.

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